CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for retrieving a property of a media file being played via a media player, wherein the media file is retrieved from one of a plurality of media file sources, which are prioritized, comprising:

 identifying a source of the media file; and

 displaying the property as defined by metadata of the identified source of the media file.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein retrieving includes retrieving the property defined by the source having the highest priority below the identified source of the media file when the identified source does not define the property.

3. The method of claim 1 further including:

 querying each of the media file sources according to their priority to identify a property for the media file defined by the metadata of the source of the media file; and

 retrieving the property as defined by the metadata of a first source in the priority identified as including metadata defining the property.

4. The method of claim 3, wherein each media file source corresponds to a metadata source, and wherein querying includes querying each of the metadata sources to identify the property for the media file.

5. The method of claim 4, wherein the priority for querying each of the metadata sources is determined according to a predetermined importance assigned to each of the plurality of metadata sources, wherein the metadata source deemed most important is queried first, and wherein the metadata source deemed least important is queried last.

6. The method of claim 5, wherein querying includes issuing a chain of calls to each metadata source, wherein a first call is to the metadata source deemed most important, and wherein a subsequent call is to the metadata source deemed the next most important, and wherein a last call is to the metadata source deemed the least important.

7. The method of claim 6, wherein the property to be displayed determines the metadata source from which to retrieve the property

8. The method of claim 1, wherein retrieving includes retrieving metadata from the metadata source that returns the property in the least amount of time.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein the plurality of metadata sources include:

an ASX source;

an WSX source;

a media library source;

a file header source;

a DRM source, and

a basic metadata source.

10. A computer readable medium having computer executable instructions for retrieving a property of a media file being played via a media player, wherein the media file is retrieved from one of a plurality of media file sources, which are prioritized, comprising:

      identifying instructions for identifying a source of the media file; and

      retrieving instructions for retrieving the property as defined by metadata of the identified source of the media file.

11. The computer readable medium of claim 10, wherein retrieving instructions include retrieving the property defined by the source having the highest priority below the identified source of the media file when the identified source does not define the property.

12. The computer readable medium of claim 10 further including querying instructions for querying each of the media file sources according to their priority to identify a property for the media file defined by the metadata of the source of the media file, and wherein retrieving instructions retrieve the property as defined by the metadata of a first source in the priority identified as including metadata defining the property.

13. The computer readable medium of claim 12, wherein each media file source corresponds to a metadata source, and wherein querying includes querying each of the metadata sources to identify the property for the media file.

14. The computer readable medium of claim 13, wherein the priority for querying each of the metadata sources is determined according to a predetermined importance assigned to each of the plurality of metadata sources, wherein the metadata source deemed most important is queried first, and wherein the metadata source deemed least important is queried last.

15. The computer readable medium of claim 14, wherein querying instructions issue a chain of calls to each metadata source, wherein a first call is to the metadata source deemed most important, and wherein a subsequent call is to the metadata source deemed the next most important, and wherein a last call is to the metadata source deemed the least important.

16. The computer readable medium of claim 10, wherein retrieving instructions determine the metadata source from which to retrieve the property as a function of the property to be displayed

17. The computer-readable medium of claim 10, wherein retrieving instructions retrieve metadata from the metadata source that returns the property in the least amount of time.

18. The method of claim 10, wherein the plurality of metadata sources include:

an ASX source;

an WSX source;

a media library source;

a file header source;

a DRM source, and

a basic metadata source.

19. A computer readable medium having stored thereon a data structure, comprising:

a first data field comprising data representing a plurality of metadata sources,

wherein each metadata source specifies metadata to display while playing a media file via

a media application;

a second data field containing data representative of the media file; and

a third functioning field identifying one of the plurality of metadata sources as a

function of the data contained in the second data field, and wherein metadata included in

the identified metadata source is retrieved while playing the media file via the media

application.

20. The computer-readable medium of claim 19, wherein each metadata source

corresponds to a source of the media file.

21. The computer-readable medium of claim 19, wherein the third functioning field

queries each of the plurality of metadata sources as a function of a preference assigned to

each metadata source to identify the metadata source from which to retrieve metadata,

and wherein the priority for querying each of the metadata sources is determined

according to a predetermined importance assigned to each of the plurality of metadata

sources, wherein the metadata source deemed most important is queried first, and wherein the metadata source deemed least important is queried last.

22. The computer-readable medium of claim 19, wherein the third functioning field identifies the metadata source from which to retrieve metadata as a function of the amount of time it takes the metadata source to return metadata, wherein the metadata source that returns metadata in the least amount of time is identified.